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AUTOGRAPH COLLECTIONS AND HISTORIC MANUSCRIPTS.

THE title of this paper should perhaps be "The Autograph Mania." I am not an autograph collector in the ordinary acceptation of that term. I have only a kind of collateral interest in the subject, and in the more serious subject of collecting books and manuscripts.

There have been several important autograph sales recently in the city of Philadelphia, and by some chance the handsomely illustrated catalogues were sent to me, giving the prices paid for the various manuscripts and autograph letters, and in a measure reviving the interest I felt in my younger days in this fascinating hobby, for with many collectors it is merely a hobby. These sales have suggested some reflections on the general subject.

The student of history naturally drifts into an interest in manuscripts, letters, and documents relating to events and men of note. The temptation to collect and own them, to become a bibliophile in the department of history or literature, often follows; and, unless the collector is wise and conservative, this increasing and generally expensive taste is apt to degenerate into a mere collecting and accumulating habit. His library will grow in books and manuscripts without really stimulating him to study and digest the historical material in store.

It seems but a single step from collecting historical works and manuscripts to collecting letters of historic or biographic value; and soon thereafter, unless the victim calls a halt, there is great danger of drifting into that absorbing state of crankiness which leads the collector to devote time, money, and valuable enthusiasm to gathering, classifying, and treasuring commonplace letters, notes, receipts, indeed scraps of paper, merely because they have been signed by men famous in history or literature, or in the musical or dramatic world.

There is no true love of history or historical research, and little benefit to the collector, in the accumulation of an autograph collection, unless the historic, biographic, or literary value of the material is uppermost in his mind; and unless he makes a specialty of securing manuscripts and letters relating to some particular field of research or literature, the result will prove disappointing, and will degenerate into the mere dissipation of collecting. A collection of miscellaneous letters or literary curios, as a rule, must be of little value. The intelligent collector will also draw the line against the mere signatures of even famous characters. They should be assigned to the souvenir class.

Unhappily, the enthusiastic collector sometimes becomes so fascinated by his hobby that he proceeds to exhaust his store of postage stamps in writing to noted people begging for autographs. Ah, this is desecration! The true disciple and lover of historic and literary treasures will scorn to condescend to such malpractice. Think of a fellow having the nerve to indite an epistle to Queen Victoria, the Empress of India, in these words: "Please kindly send me your autograph, and oblige a great admirer. Inclosed find postage stamp." And yet the good Queen rewarded an acquaintance of mine by having her secretary send him an apparently genuine signature.

Some years since I was looking through a friend's autograph portfolio, and came across a letter from John Forsyth, the distinguished editor. I suppose my friend had written for his autograph in the usual way, inclosing a postage stamp. His characteristic reply was in the following words:

MOBILE, ALA.

Mr. ———. O yes! You are one of those d——d fools who are always bothering people about their autographs. Here's mine.

JOHN FORSYTH.

Tennyson, the poet laureate, was often annoyed by the autograph cranks, but he rarely rewarded them. One woman is said to have begged him so many times for a sentiment and signature that he finally wrote the words, "Ask me no more," as a sentiment. Kipling, it is said, frequently

charges for his autographs and turns the money over to some convenient charity. Paderewski, the pianist, was kind enough to write on the parchment of a banjo sent to him with the request for a musical sentiment: "I have not the pleasure of being a performer upon this beautiful instrument. I am only a piano player. J. I. Paderewski."

A banker in Austin, Tex., as I learn, is making a most remarkable and ambitious attempt at autograph-collecting. Sometime since I received a polite note from him asking me to aid him in securing letters of my grandfather and uncle. I was surprised at the inquiry, but subsequently learned that he was actually making a systematic effort to obtain the letters of all persons whose names appear in Appleton's *Cyclopedia of Biography*, a work of six large volumes, including, I suppose, nearly as many names as a *New York City Directory*. Think of the labor of such an enterprise! I hear that he has already accumulated a vast store of letters and documents and has systematically arranged and classified them.

Scholars and lovers of literature in Tennessee and the Southwest seem to have shown little disposition to collect and treasure literary and historical mementos, letters, and documents, as few collectors are known. Mr. Joseph S. Carels, of Nashville, Librarian of the Tennessee Historical Society, has a notable collection of autograph letters, to which he has devoted a half century of industry, enthusiasm, and system. Its gems may be found in some of the glass cases of the Historical Society rooms. His collection embraces letters of all the Presidents of the United States and of all the Governors of Tennessee. Letters of emperors, kings, and queens are also plentiful. One of the oldest royal letters is that of Charles I., of England, written in 1530, three hundred and seventy-one years ago.

The Tennessee Historical Society is also the fortunate possessor of a large and rare collection of autographic material in manuscripts, letters, and documents. Probably the collection of no State Society in the South can rival it, excepting that of the Virginia Historical Society. Theodore

Roosevelt, in preparing the "Winning of the West," found the archives of the Tennessee Historical Society a veritable treasury of pioneer history. Scores of letters of Jackson, Sevier, Blount, Robertson, Donelson, Polk, and other public men of Tennessee, are filed away there, as also a most interesting letter of Abraham Lincoln. The Society also possesses the original commission of Gen. Israel Putnam, of the Revolution, and Gen. Nathaniel Greene's military cipher book. Among its manuscripts are the original records of Washington County, Tenn., beginning with the proceedings of the first county court in 1778; the original records of the State of Franklin of the year 1786; and the original journal kept by Col. John Donelson, one of the founders of the city of Nashville, of his historic voyage down the Tennessee River through the Indian country to the Ohio River, and up the Cumberland to the settlement at Nashville. It is entitled, "Journal of a voyage intended by God's permission in the good boat 'Adventure,' from Fort Patrick Henry on the Holston River. Kept by John Donelson, Dec. 22, 1779."

My own portfolio of autographs came mainly by inheritance, odd chances, and good luck. My grandfather, Judge Buckner Thruston, a native of Virginia, was in official life, and a resident of Washington City for a half century or more. He was one of the first United States Senators from the State of Kentucky, a colleague of Henry Clay; was Federal Judge of Orleans Territory; and, later, for thirty-six years Judge of the United States District Court at Washington. His interesting and varied correspondence happened to fall into my hands. While visiting my aunt in Washington, soon after I left college, she suggested that I might find something of interest in his old papers, packed away in a trunk in an attic room. I was soon at work, and it was nearing midnight before I left the dusty old trunk. A veritable epistolary bonanza I found there; material enough, indeed, to give the autograph fever to any youngster fond of books and with a taste for things antiquarian. Unhappily I was too young and too ignorant to value properly the manuscripts and documents,

and I devoted my search mainly to letters from men whom I happened to know were prominent in public life. A second gift of letters and papers of considerable value fortunately came to me through an uncle, a retired rear admiral in the navy, who had spent his official life of sixty years in Washington, when not at sea or abroad.

This double series of letters and papers included autograph letters of nearly all the Presidents of the United States and men well known in public life at Washington during three-quarters of a century. Letters from Henry Clay, John J. Crittenden, and Kentuckians were most numerous. There were several from Edward Livingston, Albert Gallatin, Bushrod and Lawrence Washington, Francis Scott Key, Webster, Calhoun, Gen. Henry Lee, C. J. Ingersoll, Admiral Farragut, Edward Everett, Tom Corwin, and the lesser lights of public and social life at the national capital and elsewhere.

Henry Clay's letters, written in a clear and pleasant style, were mainly devoted to social and business matters. In a letter from Pittsburg, in 1810, he wrote that he had hurried on to that point ahead of his family, "to arrange to descend the Ohio," and that he had left at a neighbor's "some important papers, reports, and maps, and an old pair of sherryvallies, such as the sarcastic pen of Gen. Lee had defended against the wanton malevolence of Miss Franks. Please be good enough to send for them, and have them cared for until my return." Sherryvallies? What are sherryvallies? Upon examining the Century Dictionary, I find that a humble pair of leggings bore that high-sounding title in pioneer days.

In a characteristic note Daniel Webster writes: "Will you dine with me on Saturday at 4 o'clock—a sort of bachelor dinner with two or three friends? Did you ever eat a 'Dun fish?'" I presume a "Dun fish" must have made a palatable dish, as tradition tells us that the great Daniel was devoted to his stomach as well as to his country.

There is a four-page letter from John Quincy Adams, Secretary of State, written in 1820, to my uncle, the Librarian of the State Department at Washington, giving detailed instructions for arranging and conducting the library. No

one was better qualified to write such a letter than this book-loving, system-loving old New Englander. He seems to have been laying the foundation of the present fine library of the State Department.

A long letter of John C. Calhoun's, written in 1844, harps on the subject generally uppermost in his mind. "It is a great mistake," he says, "with many, both north and west, that South Carolina is hostile to the Union as it came from the hands of its framers. But she believes that the Union may be destroyed as well by consolidation as by dissolution; and that of the two there is much more danger of the former than the latter," etc.

Among the papers in my portfolio I find a written agreement signed in 1835 by Francis Scott Key, author of the "Star-Spangled Banner," for the purchase of a negro slave. The agreement begins as follows: "Whereas Judge Thruston and myself have agreed to purchase a slave named Stephen Clark from his master, Samuel Hamilton, of Maryland, for the price of six hundred dollars, for the purpose of enabling said slave to obtain his freedom by paying up the purchase money and interest as he shall be able to do by his earnings from time to time," etc. Worthy and capable slaves were frequently purchased in those days by their white friends to enable them to buy their freedom by their labor.

My collection of books, autographs, and papers, begun in my youth, was supplemented in later years by many additions. The epoch-making years of the civil war, of course, brought rare opportunities to an army officer with a predilection for preserving, and sometimes perhaps for confiscating, historic souvenirs. A few of them may be of general interest. After nearly two years of hard and dangerous service with my regiment, I was promoted to staff duty among the magnates of the Union army in Tennessee. While with Gen. Rosecrans, after the battle at Murfreesboro, as his senior aid-de-camp, it became my pleasant duty to copy many of his important official and semiofficial letters. The kind old General wrote hastily and forcibly, but with many interlineations and erasures. The original letters

occasionally fell into my hands, instead of the wastebasket or the office file. This was during the time of Gen. Rosecrans's rather heated controversy with Gen. Halleck at Washington, in which Gen. Garfield, our chief of staff and messmate, unhappily became later involved.

Here is the first draft of one of Gen. Rosecrans's sharp letters to Gen. Halleck. I copied it at the time, and I find it in my file:

MURFREESBORO, Feb. 1, 1863.

Major General Halleck, Washington: I am surprised that you mistake my meaning. I do not complain; I point the way to victory. I tell you how I think force is to be created at slight expense. This war will demand such considerations, and many more, to save the waste of human life. Already our thinned regiments testify to this, and show no substantial gain from recruiting. I wish to be distinctly understood as making no complaints. The great point I make is, the government pays the cost of cavalry troops, without getting the benefit of their strength.

The other is that, no matter what the government has done or left undone for this army, policy and duty alike demand means to meet the coming emergency. Why should the Rebels control the country which, with its resources, would belong to our army, because it can muster the small percentage of six or eight thousand more cavalry than we? I want superior arms to supply the place of numbers. Give revolving rifles in place of pistols. We must have cavalry arms, and the difference between the best and the worst is more than one hundred per cent on the daily cost of the troops.

Excuse my earnestness in this matter. I probably see more clearly than I can explain.

W. S. ROSECRANS, *Major General.*

In my list I find the original draft of an order written and signed by Gen. W. T. Sherman, at Fayetteville, N. C., March 12, 1865, announcing to his army that his forces had reached the sea a second time, that he was in communication with Wilmington, and would soon receive supplies by river from that city.

An original letter from Gen. George H. Thomas may prove of interest. It will be remembered that a Provisional Legislature met at Nashville soon after the war to reëstablish civil government in Tennessee. It was largely composed of members loyal to the Federal Union and Republican in politics. Parson Brownlow was Governor. Gen. Thomas commanded the Military Department and the Federal forces. During the reconstruction period, and in accordance with the formal acts of the Legislature of Tennes-

see, large, life-size portraits of Gen. Thomas and Gov. Brownlow were ordered to be painted and hung in the Library at the Capitol, where they may still be seen. By legislative enactment, also, an artistic gold medal was formally presented to Gen. Thomas. By and by, however, a change came. The Confederates were enfranchised, and the Democrats and Confederates soon got control of the Legislature and State administration. Thereupon some radical member proceeded to offer resolutions condemning the pictures and threatening to have them removed from the Capitol and sold at public auction.

The incident, of course, got into the newspapers and soon came to the notice of Gen. Thomas, then commanding the Department of the Pacific. "Old Pap Thomas," as his soldiers called him, was a Virginian of the old school, and a gentleman to the very core. He was greatly annoyed by the uncomplimentary resolution. In a letter to me from California in November, 1869, he writes:

The portrait was not painted at my desire. If I had known the Legislature was contemplating having it done, I should have asked some of my friends there to stop the proceeding. The first I knew of it, as well as of the medal, was after they had been decided upon, and, presuming they had passed the resolution after due deliberation, concluded it would be better to assent cheerfully than attract public attention by declining.

You can assure the members of the Legislature that I am the last man in the United States who would be willing to impose on any person or commonwealth, and that I, through you, propose to return to the State the gold medal ordered to be struck and presented to me by the Legislature as commemorative of my services and of the troops under me. I also stand ready to refund to the State treasury the amount expended for my portrait, etc.

Soon afterwards I showed the letter to the newly elected Governor, John C. Brown, one of the best and ablest men in the State. As I expected, he kindly requested me to let the incident pass without further notice, and said that he would see that the uncomplimentary action proposed would meet the same fate.

During my long residence in Nashville a number of interesting letters and papers have drifted into my hands. I find in my portfolio three promissory notes written and signed by John Bell, the statesman, in August, 1861. They called

for the payment of several hundred dollars. Soon after the close of the war they were sent to me for collection. He was not able to pay them, of course, nor did I ever mention them to him. Dear old John Bell, whose memory they recall, was one of our great Tennesseans—indeed, one of the great men of the nation. Unhappily his spirit and fortune were crushed by the sad realities of the Civil War. He could scarcely tell which he loved best—the South or the Union. He died soon afterwards. His heart must have been broken in the intensity of the struggle.

I have also a letter of some interest from David Crockett to President Jackson. The President is addressed as “The Excellency, the President of the United States.”

But to return to the recent public sale of autographs in Philadelphia I have mentioned. The prices obtained, I think, must have been in the main disappointing. Some days there was a regular slaughter of the heroes. Military magnates, statesmen, presidents, orators, kings and queens, poets and actors, all fell under the auctioneer’s hammer at trifling prices. Sometimes the letters or papers of persons comparatively unknown brought very high figures, owing to contests among the bidders, or the desire perhaps of some descendant to possess them.

The two names that usually command the highest prices at autograph auctions are those of Washington and Lincoln. As is well known, Washington was a painstaking and voluminous letter writer. There seems no end to his genuine letters and papers. At the recent sales they brought good, standard prices—from \$25 to \$100. I have a good military letter of Washington’s written at Army Headquarters in 1778, and addressed to “Thomas Wharton, Esquire, President of the State of Pennsylvania.” It seems that the title of Governor was adopted later. Ben Franklin once had the honor of being “President and Commander-in-Chief of the State of Pennsylvania.”

At the sale Lincoln’s letters brought from \$17 to \$50. These letters are rarely on the market. Lincoln was such an earnest character that all his letters seem worth saving.

They are generally filed away in the hands of his biographers and friends. The only autographic souvenir I have of the martyred President consists of a few words on the back of a note written by my stepfather to him in 1861 and indorsed: "I will call in fifteen minutes. Lincoln."

A letter of President John Adams sold at the sale for \$27.50. Jefferson's letters brought from \$7 to \$10. He was a ready writer on many subjects, and had a large correspondence. Letters of Ben Franklin brought from \$20 to \$25, a manuscript \$79. They are rare. A letter of Paul Jones, the hero of our navy, brought \$70; one of Benedict Arnold, \$45; a letter of President Zach Taylor, \$22.50. A letter of William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, brought \$96. The letter was written in London in 1681 and seems prophetic. He wrote that he is about to start for America, and predicts its glorious future: "Mine eye is to a blessed government, and a virtuous, ingenious, and industrious society, so as people may live well and have more time to serve ye Lord than in this crowded land. God will plan America and it will have its day in ye kingdom," etc.

Letters of President Taylor, William Henry Harrison, and Andrew Johnson are very rare. A letter of Harrison's brought \$17.50. He was President but about a month, and wrote few letters. Johnson learned to write late in life, and had a very limited correspondence. At the sale letters of President Jackson brought from \$3 to \$15. It seems that Jackson must have written nearly as many letters as Washington. His letters, like his state papers, are forcible and characteristic. The popular idea of the severity of the old General's nature is disproved by his correspondence, especially by his letters to his friends and the members of his family. Many of them are full of kindness, sometimes even of tenderness. They also show culture and refinement as well as force. I have one letter that contains a ridiculous error in the way of spelling—a letter to the Hon. James K. Polk, Speaker of the House of Representatives, whom he addresses as "Col. Poke," manifestly a piece of carelessness on Jackson's part.

In my list of letter writers I find the poorest speller is the great cavalry general, Bedford Forrest. There are more than a dozen errors in spelling in a half-page letter written by him. He beat Davy Crockett as a misspeller. He wrote a good letter, however, with force and directness, but simply ignored the rules of Webster and Worcester and spelled "any old way," according to sound and convenience, just as he ignored all military rules in fighting. Gen. Forrest was fortunately endowed by nature with a genius and personality that overcame all obstacles, even the lack of an early education.

At the Philadelphia sale President Polk's letters brought from four to five dollars. Letters of Presidents Fillmore, Pierce, Tyler, Van Buren, and Buchanan brought the lowest prices, as they are still plentiful and easily obtained. A letter of President Grant's brought \$12.50. Letters of Presidents Hayes, Garfield, and Ben Harrison brought from six to eight dollars. Strange to report, the letters of the series of Moderators of the early Presbyterian General Assemblies, sold at the sale in Philadelphia, averaged in price nearly as much as the letters of the Presidents of the United States—from \$3 to \$23. One series brought \$76. Philadelphia is one of the great centers of Presbyterianism.

Some years ago, noticing in a catalogue that autograph letters of two of my Presbyterian ancestors were to be sold at Philadelphia—letters of Jonathan Dickinson, the first President of Princeton College, A.D. 1746, and of William C. Houston, delegate from New Jersey to the Convention that framed the Constitution of the United States—I sent to the auctioneer, Mr. Henkels, a bid of \$5 for each letter, thinking that I should probably get them. Imagine my surprise and innocence when he wrote me after the sale that "Dickinson's sold for \$75 and Houston's for \$40," figures away beyond our Southwestern ideas of values.

At the recent sales the autograph letters and documents of the great kings and queens of history fared about as well as the series of the Presidents. A document signed by Queen Elizabeth of England sold for \$15; a letter signed by

Frederick the Great, for \$10. Letters of Henry of Navarre, Empress Josephine, and Marie Antoinette, each brought \$10. One signed by Napoleon Bonaparte, \$16; a document, \$9. A Louis Napoleon letter brought \$9. A letter of Emperor Charles V., A.D. 1500, brought \$15. A document signed by Oliver Cromwell in 1650 sold for \$50; letters of George III., \$9. The good Queen Victoria had a long reign, and signed thousands of letters and papers. These sold for from \$4 to \$5. A letter of Gladstone's, \$9, had double the market value of the Queen's.

In my collection I have a handsome commission signed by "Victoria Reg." in 1867, with four royal seals stamped upon it. I have also a letter of the Duke of Wellington. It seems surprising that the letters and documents of the famous kings and queens are constantly on the market at autograph sales. The dealers in the large cities trade in them, and I suspect they are generally commonplace documents or letters signed, and of no special intrinsic or historic value. Most of them must be classed as autographic souvenirs.

Letters of the prominent generals of the civil war brought widely varying prices at the recent sales. Letters of Gen. Grant, Gen. Robert E. Lee, and Gen. Thomas J. Jackson are always favorites and bring good prices, especially if they have some historic value. A good war letter of Jackson's brought \$15; one of Lee's, \$7.50. A letter of Gen. Sheridan, written to Grant on the eve of Appomattox, brought \$20. A letter of Gen. J. E. B. Stuart sold for \$5; one of Admiral Farragut's, for \$4.50. Merely commonplace letters and notes of the most distinguished generals brought less than a dollar. A good military letter of Gen. Nathaniel Greene's, of the American Revolution, written in 1777, was sold for \$21, while the next item at the sale, a paper merely signed by Gen. Greene, brought but ten cents—a very just discrimination as to values.

A fine letter of Maj. Gen. Charles Lee, of the Revolution, at one time second in command to Gen. Washington, brought \$65. Lee was much more brilliant as a writer than he was as a general. His ill temper and jealousy of Gen.

Washington brought him finally into disgrace. After the war he settled in Virginia. My great-grandfather, Col. Charles M. Thruston, an officer of the Revolution, was one of his executors. His remarkable will, published in his memoirs, is often quoted. Among other provisions, it contains the following unique clause: "I desire most earnestly that I may not be buried in any church or churchyard, or within a mile of any Presbyterian or Anabaptist meetinghouse; for since I have resided in this country I have kept so much bad company when living that I do not chuse to continue it when dead." In the will he bequeathed fifty guineas to Col. Thruston, as he states, "in consideration of his good qualities and the friendship he has manifested for me; and to Buckner Thruston, his son, I leave all my books, as I know he will make good use of them." Some of these books of Gen. Lee's came to me by inheritance, and I now have them in my library.

I have also in my library two original general order books kept by Capt. Phillips, of the Second New Jersey Regiment, one of my ancestors, during the Revolutionary War. The orders were entered each day as they came from army headquarters. The first entry was a brigade order announcing Gen. Anthony Wayne's victory at Stony Point:

HEADQUARTERS, WYOMING, 25 July, 1779.

The General congratulates the army upon the glorious and important intelligence just received from his excellency General Washington's headquarters in a letter, as follows:

"HEADQUARTERS, NEW WINDSOR, 16 July, 1779.

"Permit me to congratulate you upon the success of our arms in this quarter of a most glorious and interesting nature. Brigade General Wayne, with a part of the light infantry, surprised and took prisoners the whole of the garrison of Stony Point, last night, with all the cannon, stores, mortars, howitzers, tents, baggage, etc., without the loss of more than four killed," etc.

Among other old documents I have an original parchment deed, or warrant, signed at Mobile, Ala., in 1773, by E. Durnford, "Governor and Captain General of his Majesty's forces in West Florida," conveying a tract of land in Mississippi. A handsome wax seal, five inches in diameter and stamped with the British arms, is attached to the document.

It was signed before the Revolutionary War and during the very brief period in which England held authority in West Florida. The deed appears to be unique, as no similar one is known, even at Mobile.

I have also in my library a well-preserved manuscript book of the thirteenth century, beautifully written and illustrated.

But returning again to the Philadelphia autograph sales, there were a few literary gems that sold for good prices. A good letter of Walt Whitman's brought \$16; a letter of Oliver Wendell Holmes's, \$12.50. The latter contained a verse from his fine poem, the "Pilgrim's Vision," read at the Plymouth anniversary:

The weary Pilgrim slumbers,
His resting place unknown,
His hands were crossed, his lids were closed,
The dust was o'er him strewn;
The drifting soil, the moldering leaf,
Along the sod were blown;
His mound has melted into earth,
His memory lives alone.

Autograph verses of Longfellow and Whittier brought \$8 each; a letter of Nathaniel Hawthorne, \$17; one of Washington Irving's, \$6.

As a rule, the recent sales indicate that while the average prices, especially of commonplace things, were low, there are still collectors who are willing to pay full and even fancy prices for historical manuscripts of real value, for literary gems, for autograph verses of the great poets, and for signed fragments of great music. It seems that history, sentiment, fancy, and ability to pay, all enter largely into autograph values. The scarcity of an autograph is sometimes its most valuable quality. While a good military letter of Gen. Robert E. Lee brought but \$7.50 at the Philadelphia sale, his letter to Gen. Winfield Scott in 1861, resigning his commission in the United States army, easily brought \$500 at the Donaldson sale; a memorandum of the plan of campaign in 1861, in the autograph of President Lincoln, brought \$520; and a letter of Gen. Sherman to Gen. Grant, outlining the Atlanta campaign, brought \$49.

We are often surprised at the prices paid at the European sales. Think of an offer of a hundred thousand dollars for a single autograph! That amount was offered, we are told in one of the London papers, for a genuine signature of Shakespeare. The ambitious bidder is not likely to part with his money, however, as it is said there are none on the market. The British Museum paid some \$16,000 for its specimen, years ago. The Spanish government paid \$5,000 for a Columbus autograph. Two letters of the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, written just before her execution, brought the large sum of four thousand pounds sterling.

At the latest autograph and manuscript sales in London, a lot of letters of Walter Scott brought \$1,500 (in English money); a page of the "Newcomes," in the autograph of Thackeray, \$105; a letter of Robert Burns, containing a verse of poetry, \$290; letters of David Garrick, \$2,225; a portion of the ancient manuscripts belonging to the famous Ashburton Library, \$156,000. If you should wish to possess the scrap of a letter or an autographic memento of Addison, or Thomas Gray, or Samuel Johnson, the old-time lights of English literature, it would cost you from \$25 to \$100; more, indeed, than a letter of the English sovereign who reigned in their day.

The music lovers also seem to have money as well as sentiment, if we may judge from the way they are victimized at the sales. A letter of Mendelssohn's brought \$8.50 at the Philadelphia sale; a letter of old Johann Strauss, \$8. At the late London sale—think of it—"the manuscript of the trombone parts of the ninth symphony, in the autograph of Beethoven," brought \$225; a musical manuscript of Schubert, \$165; and at the latest Paris autograph sale, a letter of Mozart sold for 460 francs (\$92), the highest price realized at the sale, though the letters of Napoleon, Gambetta, and other great men came under the auctioneer's hammer. It seems that the army of collectors is still at large, and that the real autographic gems and masterpieces of history, literature, and music will continue to command sentimental prices in the markets of the world.

G. P. THRUSTON.